(c) the details of the jobs to be executed during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

**Import of Railway Track**

6398. SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI:

SHRI B.L. SHANKAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names and quantity of the Railways items imported during the last three years upto March 31, 1997 by the Indian Railways, indicating the names of countries from where have been imported and the amount involved therein, items-wise;

(b) the reasons for the import of these items;

(c) whether any defects had been detected in some items;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken to fully indiginised the production of all Railway items in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a)

**Item**-60kg Head Hardened Rails.

**Quantity**-60,000 tonnes.

**Countries from which imported**-U.K. (40,000 tonnes) and Canada (20,000 tonnes).

**Amount**-Rs. 143 crores CIF.

(b) Head Hardened Rails are not being manufactured in India.

(c) No. Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The requirement of Head Hardened Rails for Indian Railway's being very small, there appears to be no need to develop technology for manufacture of such rails.

*[Translation]*

**Complaints of Delayed Money Orders**

6399. SHRI ILIYAS AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have conducting any inquiry into the complaints of delay in the delivery of Money Orders;

(b) if so, details thereof for the last three years, Statewise;

(c) whether disciplinary action has been initiating by the Department against the alleged guilty employees;

(d) if so, the outcome and action taken thereon; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Yes, Sir. Money orders ae mostly paid in time. Complaints about delay in payment of money orders which constitute about 0.1% of the total Money Order traffic are enquired into immediately.

(b) During the months of June, 1996 to August, 1996 a special drive was launched and duplicate money orders were issued in 90% of the complaints received, including delay in payment of money orders. The details of the complaints enquired into during the years 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96 are given below:-

| Circle | No. of complaints Received and Enquired into | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1993-94 | 1994-95 | 1995-96 |
| Assam | 6003 | 4102 | 4931 |
| Andhra | 15748 | 13674 | 18700 |
| Bihar | 6833 | 6805 | 6730 |
| Delhi | 27268 | 26900 | 32437 |
| Gujarat | 10782 | 13482 | 14399 |
| Haryana | 6376 | 5846 | 5878 |
| Himachal | 1593 | 1646 | 2300 |
| J&K | 1551 | 1611 | 1030 |
| Karnataka | 15045 | 18512 | 21775 |
| Kerala | 4907 | 5646 | 5011 |
| M.P. | 14417 | 16202 | 16629 |
| Maharashtra | 36079 | 43592 | 49699 |
| North-East | 8412 | 8579 | 8689 |
| Orissa | 4432 | 4981 | 4337 |
| Punjab | 15081 | 14857 | 14500 |
| Rajasthan | 5606 | 5888 | 6618 |
| Tamil Nadu | 13332 | 15566 | 14963 |
| U.P. | 22989 | 32217 | 29276 |
| West Bengal | 24270 | 26158 | 27450 |
| Base P.O. | 1427 | 978 | 1608 |
| | 242139 | 267242 | 286960 |

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) Disciplinary action was initiated. During the Years 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96, 117, 210 and 185 officials, respectively were punished.

**Running of Jabalpur-Bhopal Intercity Train**

6400. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJPE: Will the Ministry of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware about the demands of members of Rail Consumers Advisory Committee Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh regarding the introduction of Jabalpur-Bhopal Intercity train, running of Jabalpur-Delhi Mahamaya train with full bogies and suitable timings of trains for passengers.

(b) is so, whether the Government propose to take any action in this regard; and

(c) if so, the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (c) Demands for introudction of a train between Jabalpur-Bhopal, running of Jabalpur-Nizamuddin Gondwana Express with full load and re-scheduling of Gondwana Express have been examined but have not been found feasible due to operational and resource constraints. Besides, Jabalpur-Nizamuddin Gondwana Express is running with full load between Bina and Nizamuddin.

*[English]*

**New Mineral Exploration Policy**

6401. SHRI K. PRADHANI: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce a new mineral exploration policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which this policy is likely to be announced?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) to (c) The policy prescription for exploration of minerals is covered under the National Mineral Policy, 1993. There is no proposal to introduce a separate new mineral exploration policy.

**Forfeiture of Bank Guarantees**

6402. SHRIMATI LAKSHMI PANABAKA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the privatisation of basic telephone services suffered a severe set back as the Communications Ministry revoked letters of Intent and also forfeiture of bank guarantees of Essar group of companies;

(b) if so, whether from out of 13 companies that have licence so far in the field of basic telephone are now in jeopardise;

(c) whether the Tara and DoT is already involved in litigation with the controversial Himachal Futuristic Co. Ltd.; and

(d) if so, steps the Government propose to take to revive their licences?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) and (b) As against 12 Letters of Intent (LOIs) issued to 8 companies for providing telephone service in 12 Telecom Circles, 2 companies viz. M/s Bharti Telenet and M/s Reliance Telecom., after payment of first year's lincence fee, have signed the Lincenes for Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat Circles respectively. 2 companies holding 3 LOIs have yet to complete formalities and deposit licence fee for conversion of their LOIs into Licenes. Remaining 4 companies holding 7 LOIs (including M/s Essar Group holding LOI for Punjab Circle) have filed Civil Suits in the High Court of Dehhi against Government's order for forfeiture of their Earnest Money Bank Guarantees due to their failure to comply with tender provisions. Their cases are sub-judice. Government, however, has made appropriate efforts to resolve a number of issues raised by them to facilitate successful implementation of these projects.

(c) M/s HFCL Bezeq Telecom Ltd., the LOI holding company for Delhi, Haryana, UP (West) and Orissa, has filed Civil Suit in the High Court of Delhi against the Government's action to invoke their Earnest Money Bank Guarantee due to their Non-compliance of tender provisions. Further, Government is not aware of any litigation between M/s Tata and M/s Himachal Futuristic Co. Ltd., the two private sector companies.

(d) The cases are sub-judice in the High Court of Delhi.

*[Translation]*

**Loan to Educated Unemployed Youth for Starting Hotels**

6403. DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR:

SHRI DEVI BOX SINGH:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government provide loans on concessional rates to educated unemployed youth of hilly region of Uttaranchal of Uttar Pradesh for starting hotels etc. at tourist spots;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the criteria being followed to identify the beneficiaries; and

(d) the number of such youth in the Tehri Garhwal and Uttarkashi districts provided loan under the said scheme during the last three years?